



The transforming touch of Heaven

STUDY 12

Sunday 8th July 2018

Reading – Luke 14.12-24; Romans 14.17

12. THE SOUNDS OF THE KINGDOM

We come to the close of our series on Kingdom Come.

- In what way does the crown on the series graphic declare to us what the Kingdom of God is all about?
- The Kingdom of God has been summed up in the statement 'God's people in God's place under God's rule enjoying God's blessing.' How would you apply that statement to our life together at WBC? Does it impact the way you should pray for the church family here in Willesborough?
- Is there any aspect of the teaching over the last 12 weeks that has challenged your thinking regarding the Kingdom of God?

Jesus says, make the kingdom of God your priority.

Matt 6.33 - *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.* Pursue the kingdom above everything else and you will not be disappointed.

Take a moment to read the parable – we don't need to unpack all that the parable teaches but it does celebrate how the Kingdom of God is like a great banqueting feast.

- What are some of the applications to kingdom life within the picture of a great feast?

Romans 14.17 brings to us what sounds of the Kingdom of God are to be heard as we live being those who allow the transforming touch of heaven to come down.

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit

Paul stood against any form of legalism – the observance of a long list of rules and regulations. He believed supremely in Christian liberty and this is why he declares that the Kingdom of God is not about the observance of regulations, but the liberty of the Spirit who moves freely and graciously in our lives bringing down the power of heaven.

1. THE KINGDOM OF GOD OFFERS THE SOUND OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The word 'righteousness' is a strong theological word but let's keep it simple and understand it as the experience of being declared right with God through faith in the finished work of Christ (the totally righteous one) upon the cross to reconcile us to God. 2 Cor 5.20-21; 1 Cor 1.30.

It is the sound of a changed life. In the divine court, Christ has paid our debt and we are declared not-guilty and acquitted. Filled with the Holy Spirit we are to walk in righteousness.

- Take the experience of Paul and see something of how he allowed the sound of righteousness to be heard through his life and testimony. Acts 26 is where Paul shares his testimony with Agrippa. (Romans 1.16-17; Titus 3.5)

The Kingdom of God is about God's redeeming activity through the cross that by repentance and faith births us into the Kingdom.

- This is what Nicodemus, a Pharisee of the ruling council was to discover in John 3.3 *I tell you the truth, no-one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.* How does Jesus enable Nicodemus to see the truth – what other illustrations does Jesus use to connect with Nicodemus.

Nicodemus, when Jesus dies, links up with Joseph of Arimathea to take and prepare Jesus's body (John 19:39).

We are to live out the righteousness of Christ in our daily life in right living that glorifies God and honours Christ.

2. THE KINGDOM OF GOD OFFERS THE SOUND OF PEACE

Jesus certainly brought peace in and through his ministry because he brought heaven down in its transformational power. The healing events were to bring the shalom of God, the peace, wholeness of healing and life. The demonised were set free from all that dictated a restlessness in their lives; and peace is particularly seen in the Gadarene demoniac in Mark 5.1-20

There is a beatitude that celebrates the sound of peace '*blessed are the peace makers for they will be called the sons of God*' Matt 5. 9.

Alan spoke about the acronym **BLESS** in order to be blessed and be a blessing into the wider community.

- What do you think about **BLESS** remaining at the core of our life together as a church family?

B – Begin with prayer. Pray for the people around you, those you meet, work with. Ask God to guide you regarding how you can bless others.

L – Listen. We so often do too much talking. We need to listen to the problems, issues that people are facing.

E – Eat. Meals can be great times to bless another person, it might even be a cup of coffee.

S – Serve. As you get to know people you discover the best way to serve them.

S – Story. Through serving you have earned the right to share your story of how Jesus changed your life.

3. THE KINGDOM OF GOD OFFERS THE SOUND OF JOY

Joy is expressed in new and deeper ways when we enter the Kingdom of God. Joy is the outworking of his ruling grace and power in our lives.

Discover the beauty of Jesus the joy giver through seeking the God of 'exceeding joy' Psalm 43.4.

- Share some other verses regarding the sound of joy that you can recall.
- Joy breaks through even the trials and suffering. James 1.2; 1 Peter 1.8.

The command of Kingdom living is surely, Phil 4.4 *rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice.*

- How can the joy be snatched away where we pray like David of old *restore to me the joy of my salvation*' Psalm 51.12?

Pray together 'Your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.'

FOR YOUR NOTES